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SUBJECT: BRAZIL: AMBASSADOR PRESENTS CREDENTIALS TO PRESIDENT LULA

CLASSIFIED BY: Thomas A. Shannon, Ambassador, State, Embassy
Brasilia; REASON: 1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Ambassador Shannon presented his credentials to Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on February 4. Lula indicated his continuing interest in building a strong relationship with President Obama and his desire for active engagement aimed at developing the enormous potential he sees in the broader bilateral relationship. Haiti, climate change, Iran, and the Middle East peace process were areas he identified as ripe for Brazil-U.S. cooperation, and he was pleased to hear of that the Secretary, the Attorney General, and the Secretary of Commerce would be visiting over the next month to advance the bilateral agenda. End summary.

¶2. (C) Joined by Acting Foreign Minister Antonio Patriota and Presidential Foreign Policy Advisor Marco Aurelio Garcia, President Lula-looking fit after his hypertension episode a week earlier-warmly received the Ambassador in a meeting that ran well beyond the prescribed time for the encounter. Throughout the discussion, he made clear his interest in a strong relationship with President Obama and his Administration. He expressed hope that the President would visit Brazil soon to build on the good dialogue and cooperation begun last year at the Summit of the Americas in Trinidad and Tobago and the OAS annual meeting in San Pedro Sula, seeing the President's engagement as critical to a new quality of relationship not only with Brazil, but with Latin America as a whole. Lula indicated he had high expectations for being able to further develop the bilateral relationship under President Obama, a relationship that he believes has enormous unexploited potential.

¶3. (C) The Ambassador extended the President's greetings and his goal of building a strong partnership with Brazil, not only with regard to regional cooperation but also on the many global issues we are working on together. Lula was pleased to hear that the Secretary, Attorney General, and Secretary of Commerce were planning to visit in the next month. He said he would especially like U.S. climate change negotiators to visit Brazil soon; "we must be well coordinated heading to Mexico," he said, referring to the UNFCCC COP-16.

¶4. (C) The Ambassador thanked President Lula for Brazil's efforts and contributions in the aftermath of the earthquake in Haiti. Lula, clearly fully engaged on Haiti, stressed the need to put the United Nations and Haitian government back in charge of the recovery efforts. He lamented that there was a reticence to give assistance directly to the GOH, for fear of corruption, but that much of the aid given through NGOs actually went to pay salaries and overhead for foreigners or staff outside Haiti. A new way must be found to ensure assistance reaches Haitians, he said. He described U.S. efforts and troop presence as "natural" in light of our proximity to Haiti, and said he saw the recovery effort going

forward as an important opportunity for the United States and Brazil to collaborate. Lula outlined his commitment to build Urgent Assistance Units (Unidades de Pronto Atendimento, or UPAs) and a field hospital in Haiti, among Brazil's other efforts.

¶5. (C) Finally, Lula told the Ambassador that he is planning a visit to Iran in May, and that his goal in engaging is to "lower the temperature" on the Iran issue. The President also mentioned that he will visit Israel and Palestine in March, indicating that he sees this as another area for potential cooperation between the United States and Brazil.

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